

## AUTOMATIC EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATORS IN THE SCHOOL SETTING

Sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) can strike a seemingly healthy person without warning. Automated external defibrillators are devices that shock the heart to restore a normal heartbeat after a life-threatening irregular rhythm.

Respiratory arrest, not cardiac arrest, is the leading cause of death in children.<sup>(5)</sup> With any sudden cardiac arrest, assess the ABC's and initiate CPR. According to the American Heart Association Statement, July 01/2003, "there is no specific data, but pediatric cardiac arrests occur much less often than adult cardiac arrests. But in those cases where it's necessary, AEDs can save a young person's life."<sup>(6)</sup>

KRS 311.667 Requirements for person or entity acquiring an automated external defibrillator states:

In order to ensure public health and safety:

1. A person or entity who acquires an AED shall ensure that:
  - a. Expected AED users receive American Heart Association or American Red Cross training in CPR and AED use, or an equivalent nationally recognized course in CPR and AED use;
  - b. The AED is maintained and tested according to the manufacturer's operational guidelines;
  - c. There is medical oversight of the AED program by a physician licensed in Kentucky to ensure compliance with requirements for training, maintenance, notification, and communication with the local emergency medical services system. The physician providing oversight shall also work with the AED site to establish protocols for AED deployment and conduct a review of each use of an AED; and
  - d. Any person who renders emergency care or treatment on a person in cardiac arrest by using an AED activates the local emergency medical services as soon as possible and, if an entity with an AED program, reports any clinical use of the AED to the licensed physician.
2. Any person or entity who acquires an AED shall notify an agent of the local emergency medical services system and the local emergency communications or vehicle dispatch center of the existence, location, and type of AED acquired.<sup>(7)</sup>

For further information:

The following documents are good resources of information of the use of AED's in the school setting:

American Heart Association (2003). AHA Statement: AEDs safe to use on children ages 1 to 8. Available [Online]: <http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=3013236><sup>(6)</sup>

National Association of School Nurses (2000). Position Statement, The Use of Automatic External Defibrillators in the School Setting. Available [Online]:  
<http://www.nasn.org/postions/autoexterdefib.htm><sup>(8)</sup>

American Heart Association. AED Public Access to Defibrillation (PAD Programs) Available [Online]:  
<http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=3011859><sup>(9)</sup>